

Can livestock get CWD from infected deer or elk?

The Missouri Department of Agriculture states that current research shows there is no evidence that CWD can spread from infected deer or elk to livestock, such as sheep or cattle.

What can the public do to help?

The Department of Conservation continues to test sick deer for CWD. If you observe or harvest a sickly deer, please contact your nearest Department of Conservation office.

Should hunters take precautions when field dressing or processing deer meat?

There is no evidence that CWD affects humans. Hunters concerned about any deer-related disease or parasites should wear rubber gloves while field dressing and processing deer.

What if I hunt deer or elk out-of-state?

According to the *Wildlife Code*, the importation, transportation, or possession of cervid (such as deer, elk, moose) carcasses or cervid carcass parts taken from or obtained outside of Missouri is prohibited, except:

- meat that is cut and wrapped;
- meat that has been boned out;
- quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached;
- hides or capes from which all excess tissue has been removed;
- antlers;

- antlers attached to skull plates or skulls cleaned of all muscle and brain tissue;
- upper canine teeth;
- finished taxidermy products.

You may transport carcasses or parts of carcasses with the spinal column or head attached into Missouri only if you report them to the Department by calling 877-853-5665 within 24 hours of entering the state, and then take them to a licensed meat processor or taxidermist within 72 hours of entry. Licensed meat processors and taxidermists shall dispose of the discarded tissue in a properly permitted landfill.

For more information on CWD, visit mdc.mo.gov/node/3920, or contact:

Missouri Department of Conservation
573-751-4115

Missouri Department of Agriculture
Division of Animal Health
573-751-3377

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Section of Communicable Disease Control
and Veterinary Public Health
573-751-6113

FACTS ABOUT Chronic Wasting Disease



What is Chronic Wasting Disease?

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) belongs to a group of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). TSEs cause a degeneration of the brain in deer, elk and moose. CWD has been documented in free-ranging and captive white-tailed deer, as well as mule deer, elk and moose. It has been found in captive and free-ranging populations of deer and elk in many states and Canadian provinces, including a number of Midwestern states, including Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

When was CWD first discovered?

In 1967, CWD was first detected in deer within the northeast portion of Colorado.

Where is CWD found today

in Missouri?

Captive white-tailed deer tested CWD positive

in February 2010 in Linn county and in October 2011 in Macon county. CWD has not been found in free-ranging deer in Missouri.

Between 2002 and 2004, with the help of

hunters, the Department of Conservation tested more than 22,000 deer from all 114 counties in the state. All tests were negative. With the

conclusion of the sampling program in 2004, our surveillance efforts shifted to sampling sick deer reported by the public. In 2007, we began a

three-year program of CWD testing in which one-third of the state was sampled annually. From 2007–2009, MDC tested 4,205 free-ranging

white-tailed deer with all testing negative. In response to the finding of the first CWD-positive captive white-tailed deer, we conducted targeted

testing of 1,132 free-ranging deer in parts of Linn, Macon and Chariton counties. During the 2011–2012 hunting season, MDC will continue to test free-ranging deer in Linn, Macon and Chariton counties in response to the second CWD-positive case. As of October 2011, MDC has tested more than 30,200 free-ranging deer with no cases of CWD positive found. Targeted testing of sick deer continues, and your help is needed to ensure sick deer are reported and sampled.

How is CWD spread?

CWD can come into a state through the natural movement of free-ranging deer and elk or via the interstate shipment of hunter-harvested or captive white-tailed deer, mule deer or elk. Once the disease is established, CWD spreads from one animal to another through animal-to-animal contact or soil-to-animal contact.

What is Missouri doing to protect the state against CWD?

The Missouri Departments of Conservation (MDC) and Agriculture (MDA) are working together to help keep deer and elk from CWD-infected states out of Missouri and to examine sources of infection that could already exist in the state. MDC will continue to test deer that appear sick and to monitor the health of the state's deer herd by collecting samples from sick deer reported by the public. Captive deer and elk herds in Missouri are monitored through a surveillance program.

MDA and MDC formed a state Cervid Health Committee in 2002 to ensure broad input into our state's efforts to manage the risks associated

What are the symptoms of CWD?

with CWD. This task force is composed of veterinarians, animal health officers and conservation officers from MDA, MDC, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and the US Department of Agriculture working together to mitigate challenges associated with CWD. The task force will continue to incorporate new information into monitoring programs and ensure the public has access to the most up-to-date information.

Deer or elk with CWD show changes in natural behavior and can exhibit extreme weight loss, excessive salivation, stumbling and tremors. Chronic wasting disease is thought to always be fatal to the infected animal, but it can take months or years before the symptoms of infection appear.

How is CWD diagnosed?

Chronic wasting disease can only be confirmed by laboratory examination of brain or lymph tissue. Scientists are working on a number of approaches that may provide, in the future, a live-animal test that can be used on both deer and elk.

Can people get CWD from infected deer or elk?

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services states that there is no evidence that CWD can infect people. CWD is not viewed as a human health issue.

